



# 2020 Reflective Journal

**November 1**

***Clear Speech and Communication THTR10019***

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# ***How To Have Fun With Clear Speech***



## ***Speaking is Amazing***

**This semester, I am really excited to join Clear Speech class. We were taught to have a good speech with great guidance from teacher.**

***“In my life, starting to speak is a great opportunity to broaden my horizon”***

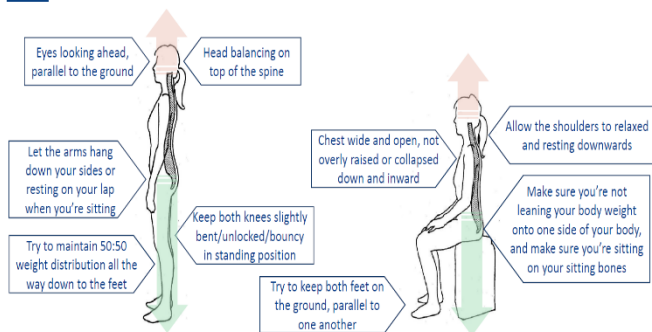
***As an international student, we need to have more communication skills to ensure we can ask for support and to help others in any situation as well.***

***In the following journal, I will share my experiences to show how I get involved in this class and what I have learn to make improvement.***

# Wk1 – Wk3

I am very lucky to be part of Mark's group. I really want to improve my speaking and be more talkative because I must get used to group-style tasks in the future. In the beginning, we were taught to pronounce correctly and **keep our breath and posture in a good state**. Also, we learnt about **diphthongs and word stress** and know how to do that with our body.

## WEEK 1 REVIEW



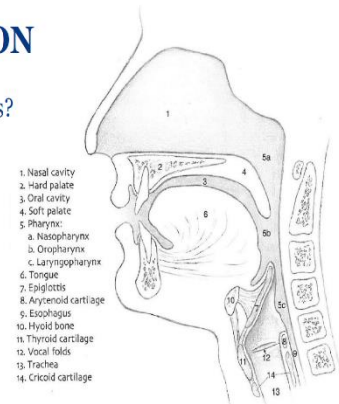
Images taken and adapted from Michael McCollon's The Voice Book (1998)

Figure 1 : Week 2 Slide

## ARTICULATION

What are the main articulators?

- Tongue
- Lips
- Jaw
- Teeth
- Gum/Alveolar Ridge
- Hard Palate
- Soft Palate



Taken from Jane Heinrich's VOICE AND THE ALEXANDER TECHNIQUE (2011)

Figure 2 : Week 3 Slide

With his guidance, all of us were happy and enjoyed speaking in front of people and knew a lot of new **Australian slangs and expressions**.

I was facing a challenge in first few weeks that I want to speak more fluently and can naturally use proper words in my sentence. I tried sitting correctly and made my speaking slower than before to have more proper breath pace, besides, I have **watched some good TedTalk video to learn from them**. After many times of practices, I can now speak with more confidence and less mistakes.



Figure 3 : TedTalk – Your Body Language May Shape Who You Are

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# Introducing Ourselves (Assignment 1)

## Assessment Outline:

For this short introduction video, students should focus on the following:

- Introduce your name and where you're from
- Briefly explain why you chose to do this subject
- Share what you hope to achieve by the end of this semester

## Assessment Criteria:

- Demonstrate effective alignment and breathing to support speech
- Demonstrate clear speech sounds
- Demonstrate appropriate use of volume

### *Figure 4 : Assignment 1 Overview*

Briefly, I am an international student from Taiwan, I might have quite heavy accent in my video, also, my skills on this video did not present very well. As the grade showed, result was not in my expectation, I **should take more time to inhale and control my speaking pace**.

## Reflection

From Mark's advice, my **speech sound** made all the emphasized parts not clear and I **did not take enough pauses** between statements or sentences probably because I am **too nervous** when recorded myself. I collected the feedback to make sure I would not miss these potential problems in my next speaking assignment.



## Breathing

### Common causes of breathing problems:

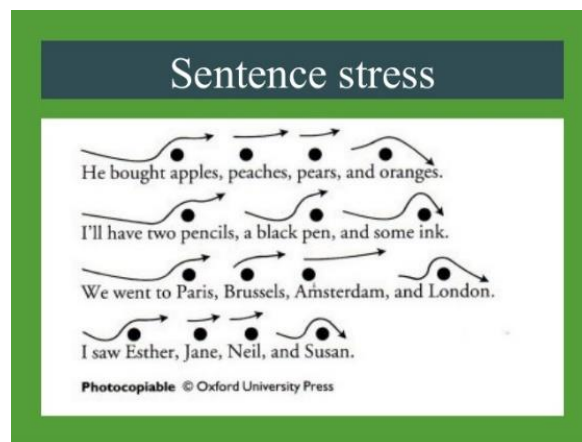
- Asthma
- Allergies
- Respiratory infections/diseases (E.g. COVID-19, influenza)
- Injuries (particularly around the head/neck/chest region)
- Poor posture (standing/sitting/lying down)
- Tension in the body (head, neck, shoulders, torso, hips, knees, feet)

### *Figure 5 : Week 1 Slide*

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## Wk4 – Wk6

After the first assignment, we were taught about sentences stress and tones to show our pitch. But the sentence stress part is more important than words stress in my point of view. Since primary school, I have stood on the stage for many times to deliver speeches spoken Taiwanese. After hundreds of practices and a few numbers of competition, these experiences made me realize **sentence stress that will catch audiences' attention.**



*Figure 6 : Online Resource*

<https://www.slideshare.net/abdulhalim191/pronunciationsentence-stress>

In addition, **linking words**, **linking sounds**, and the **schwa**, the “**Connected Speech Skills**”, will make us speak more fluently. This is of a great importance in our conversation basically. For our next assignment, it also plays a leading role in our speech. We need to develop some common sense to know when to use in each sentence. Moreover, I uploaded my first video reply in discussion board, which was also a way to practice and I did receive the useful response from Mark that I can be more careful in my final presentation.

For us, we already have been taught in tutorial, then I go watch YouTube or ask my local friends to be more familiar with the usage of linking sounds and linking words. And lecture slide also tells us, “**Practice does not make perfect. Practice reduces the imperfection**”, I will keep improving by following the rule.

# One-Minute Pitch (Assignment 2)

## Assessment Outline:

For this one-minute pitch, students should briefly talk about:

- What their chosen topic is and why they chose it
- Why this topic means so much to them (personal story)
- What they hope their listeners will gain from this topic (challenge, offer, invitation, advice)

## Assessment Criteria:

- Use effective alignment and breathing to support speech
- Demonstrate clear structure in your argument in the moment of speaking (clear introduction, clear elaboration, clear conclusion)
- Use appropriate linking / joining sounds to increase speech fluency
- Apply appropriate word and sentence stress to convey meaning and engage the listener

### Figure 7 : Assignment 2 Overview

When preparing the second assignment in this period, I have reviewed the comments from Mark from the first assignment in order not to make the same mistake from the previous one. As I am a science student studying in Computer Science, **any topics relating to the computer** will be taken into consideration. On top of that, we are going to live in a new generation that is full of AI technology, thus I decided to talk about this issue according to the relationships between human beings and Artificial Intelligence.

## Reflection

Although I did not receive comment from Mark, but I could know how my assignment perform from the grade mark. Mine is just 0.1 higher than the average, which means I have pretty much room for improving myself. Especially the skills from previous lectures contents, I must handle them better in my final presentation. And I found my assignment has 2 problems. First, **my pausing pace is not setting well** and just pretty like my previous work. And the other is about **my pronunciation**, this is the biggest issue of my speech.



## ARTICULATION

### Articulation Problem 1:

*Uncertainty of the correct pronunciation of the word*

### Solution:

Use a pronunciation dictionary  
Ask a friend or a teacher

Figure 8 : Week 5 Slide



## ARTICULATION

### Articulation Problem 2:

*Pace of speech (too quick); mumbling*

### Solution:

Lengthen the vowel sounds in each word  
Mean every word you say: *"There's a world in a word"*  
Take longer, deeper breaths in between phrases

Figure 9 : Week 5 Slide

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## Wk7 – Wk9

From week 7 start, our tasks will focus more on storytelling skills. And this is also a preparation for our last assignment in week 12. Firstly, we have more exercises in tutorials, which showed the power of practice. **Either the structures or the main topics, they are all our emphasis in final presentation.** We would have a small talk with classmates and use the skills learnt from previous weeks to display our understanding.



### SPEECH STRUCTURE

The basic structure for your final presentation should include:

1. Speech Hook (Pre-Intro)
2. Introduction
3. Personal Story
4. Main Body
5. Conclusion



### NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

What constitutes **non-verbal communication**?

- Postural alignment (stance/pose)
- Hand gestures
- Facial expressions
- Eye contact
- Tone of voice

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**Figure 10 : Week 8 Slide**

**Figure 11 : Week 9 Slide**

On top of that, we should not only catch audience by our language, but **the non-verbal communication is more important than we imagine.** With more interaction between we speakers and audience, we can demonstrate our determination. That is also a way to convey our thought even clear in a combination of good understandable content.



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## Wk10 – Wk12

In each week's tutorial, I always like to speak, be the first one to exercise or response to tutor because **we are here improving our skills and I do love to share personal stories or experiences**. And this is a good chance to construct my words. Basically, speaking accent must be the biggest challenge for each foreign speaker including me.

However, we can keep practising by having a small talk with local friends or our tutor, we can also use as much English-Speaking with classmates to **make both of us learn faster and speaking more naturally**. And the most helpful part in my opinion is the paraphrasing. We also have exercise in tutorial. At that moment, we could have more creativity and did really work our language knowledges and skills in speaking. And we can share ideas among our group to get more powerful and proper ways to express meaning.



### FINAL ORAL PRESENTATION (AT3)

1. Connect with your body, breath and voice (tone, pitch, volume, pace, pause)



2. Connect with what you are saying (words, images, meaning, intention, emotions)



3. Connect with your audience (voice, eye contact, smile, facial expression, gestures)

*Figure 12 : Week 11 Slide*

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And these 3 weeks were really important to us because we must come up ideas of our assignment and construct the content of our 3-minute speech.



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# Final Oral Presentation (Assignment 3)

## Assessment Outline:

This three-minute presentation is a longer version of the one-minute pitch that the students presented in Week 6. As such, there should be more in-depth information surrounding each student's topic. By the end of the presentation, listeners should have a very clear understanding of:

- What the presenter's topic is
- Why the presenter chose this topic (personal journey/story)
- What the lessons to be learnt from this topic include/involve
- What the presenter's call to action is for everyone

## Assessment Criteria:

- Use effective alignment and breathing in the moment of speaking
- Demonstrate effective use of vocal dynamics (pitch, pace, pause, emphasis and volume) to advance meaning in your presentation
- Demonstrate clear speech sounds
- Use appropriate linking / joining sounds to increase speech fluency
- Apply appropriate word and sentence stress to convey meaning and engage the listener

### *Figure 13: Assignment 3 Overview*

I made extension of my 1-minute pitch, and mainly **focus on the shortage of machine learning technology**. Simply talking about what the problems are and how to fix them in order to have more secure future with this advanced technology. Also, **what I can do to contribute myself to the world**.

## Reflection

I was really nervous when I am delivering my 3-minute speech. At that moment, what I could think is to **make sure I speak slowly enough and loudly enough** to let my audience can hear what I was saying. To be honest, I am so surprised that I could do it and spoke with proper volume, also I could implement the advice from Mark that is super helpful for my presentation.

**I like my pace in the final presentation**, especially I could do pretty slow but still fluent in the whole process, which is awesome. If I can change a little in my final presentation, I would like to stand in front of the laptop just like I am on the stage giving my speech. I think that will give me more sense of achievement when I did all that I have done this week and probably can show my skills easily.

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## *Epilogue and Summary*

I really enjoy this subject. Luckily, my tutor is the lecturer, Mark, who helps me build my confidence this semester. In the start of each class, I am in favour of facial exercises for the reason that this warm-up is not merely a funny movement, but it really relaxes. I can feel my whole body is ready for the challenges after I do the speech warm-up.

Besides, my speaking has improved. I learnt the skills for clear speech and **accumulated the speech experience unconsciously**. I really appreciate every single one who cheered up me during this semester, and the most important one, Mark, the best tutor I have ever met, who continuously inspired us and gave substantial advices to let all student be a better speaker.

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*The University of Melbourne*